

**White Rock**  
**Concerts**  
*Presents*

**ANTON KUERTI**



*Friday, February 20, 1998*

# White Rock Concerts

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**The Scholars of London**  
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A pocket version of the King's Singers, this a capella quartet from London has thrilled audiences in fifty countries since their debut in 1970.

**The Chinook Duo**  
Gloria Saarinen, *piano*  
Arnold Draper, *piano*

**November 27, 1998**

Two outstanding Canadian pianists performing together a program ranging from Mozart and Schubert to Rachmaninoff and Dvořák.

**Kevin McMillan**  
Baritone

**January 29, 1999**

Internationally acclaimed Canadian baritone, McMillan is a veteran of recording, recital and opera.

**The Lafayette Quartet**  
String Quartet

**March 19, 1999**

In residence at the University of Victoria, the Lafayette Quartet appears frequently at chamber music festivals and series throughout North America.

**The Schubert Octet**  
Andrew Dawes, *violin*  
George Zukerman, *bassoon*  
*others to be announced*

**April 9, 1999**

An unprecedented coming together of some of Canada's top musicians to perform the Schubert Octet, as well as works by Rossini and Nielsen.



# ANTON KUERTI

## Programme Notes by Anton Kuerti

**Franz Schubert**

**Three Impromptus D. 899, Op. 90**

**Impromptu No. 3 in G flat Major, D. 899**

**Andante**

Throughout this unique piece, the lower voice of the right hand never interrupts its rapid sextuplet accompaniment, which at first rustles almost inaudibly, gently providing a sweetly glistening but very discreet coloring to the simple melody singing above it.

The warm but shy introspection of the opening veers suddenly into minor for much of the middle section. A nearly bitter pathos is introduced yet the continuous flow of the accompaniment remains relatively unaffected.

Eventually, after some delicious modulations, peace is restored, and the Impromptu ends even more ethereally than it began.

**Impromptu No. 2 in E flat Major, D. 899**

**Allegro**

This Impromptu is one of Schubert's most popular piano works, featuring continuous, rapidly flowing motion and soaring lines that are imbued with Schubert's unequalled melodic genius.

The middle section is again in the minor, the overall effect thus becoming dramatic and tragic, as the piece which started so good-naturedly ends in despair. There are vanishingly few other pieces in the classical/romantic repertoire that start in major and end in minor.

**Impromptu No. 4 in A flat minor**

**Allegretto**

The rustling arabesques that start this work alternate curiously with an extended sigh of six plaintive cords. Subsequently, the arabesques are heard almost without interruption until the end of the main section, while a wondrously warm melody is added underneath them in the rich tenor section of the piano.

The middle section is vibrantly poignant, with a stirring melody that climbs back and forth between introspective sorrow and agonized distress.

**Ludwig van Beethoven**

**Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57**

**Allegro assai**

**(Appassionata)**

**Andante con moto**

**Allegro ma non troppo**

The "Appassionata" finds Beethoven at the height of his dramatic power. Each movement has an ecstatic climax near its end.

The soft, distant opening of the piece casts a majestic and foreboding mood. The shining second theme, which takes over in A flat Major, is formed from the same nervous rhythm thus providing an unusual sense of unity and continuity. The development continues this where one theme flows smoothly into another.

The warmth of the second subject rapidly expires and dissolves into trills which dissolve into a terrifying pianissimo descending scale to the dark and distant key of A flat minor. The rest of the exposition is filled with furor and despair.

By the time we reach the recapitulation, the emotional tension has been raised to a painful level. There is a new pulsating accompaniment in the bass as the music becomes more intense and virtuosic. The tempo eventually increases, and now the

piano and the pianist are at battle. The once friendly serene element, the second subject, now reappears in a minor key, its character shockingly altered. It thus becomes the most agonizing element of all: the movements only sunlight has been eclipsed and banished.

The second movement is a set of variations with the accompaniment being the very substance of the music. It is quiet but chilling, like the waves in the middle of the ocean. Over this rises a series of desolate, penetrating cries, separated by gasp-like rests.

The Finale is in Sonata form which winds on ever building to a climax. Suddenly it bursts, breaking into a dance which is both demonic and majestic. At last, the accompanying material is allowed to cascade out tumultuously, sweeping us to a frenetic conclusion.

## **Franz Schubert**

## **Moments musicaux Op. 94 D 780**

The Moments musicaux are Schubert's only short piano works. Apparently written in the last years of his life, they display a beautiful variety of emotion, color and invention, though they are probably not meant to be played as a group.

## **Carl Czerny - (1824)**

## **Sonata No. 3 in F minor, Op. 57**

**Allegro moderato, con anima**

**Andante con moto ma serio**

**Allegro molto agitato**

**Allegro ma non troppo, capriccioso**

Carl Czerny (1791-1857) occupies an important niche in music history, as the link between Beethoven, the profound archetype of highly emotional and spiritual music, and Liszt, who exemplifies the ultra-romantic and often exhibitionist virtuoso. For Beethoven was Czerny's teacher and Liszt, his student.

This Sonata is a superbly constructed, profound work with long soaring melodies, and an endearing tenderness that reflects the beautiful character of its composer.

The dark and melancholy first movement is a masterpiece of concentrated, compact expression. The supremely lyrical second theme continues the alert dotted rhythm of the first theme, but it has a warm sweet nobility that comforts the preceding pathos.

The development introduces urgent 16th notes that grow in vehemence until the recapitulation, which is dramatically strengthened. An overwhelming moment follows, as the main theme suddenly veers from the minor and adopts the color and exalted sweetness of the second theme.

The Andante's form is an interesting blend of variation form with 3-part form, the middle section being an elaborate contrapuntal development of the tail end of the theme.

The Scherzo is exceptionally intense, relieved only by a brief excursion into what sounds almost like circus music. The trio is more unusual. It's songful introspective nature is interrupted repeatedly by long pauses, brief exclamations and harmonic pauses.

The finale is the longest and most dramatic part of the Sonata. Chords fly around in agony and orchestral effects defy the limits of pianistic sonorities.

The swirling development in full sway comes to an unexpected halt, and is interrupted by a monumental non-sequitur, as though a new movement were being spliced in. An ingenious, tight canon is presented here in which the leading voice switches suddenly back and forth between the treble and the bass.

All that remains is a frenetic coda which requires the last remaining bit of pianistic adrenaline to bring the massive work to a stunning conclusion.

## ANTON KUERTI

*"Imagine a pianist with intellectual depth, and impeccable technique and a penchant for the unconventional interpretations, and you have a glimpse of Anton Kuerti...he seems to defy the limitations of the instrument...amazing in retrospect."*  
Chicago Tribune, April 13, 1987

Mr. Kuerti needs little introduction. An international star of the highest rating, Anton Kuerti was born in Vienna, grew up and studied with some of the world's best pianists in the United States, eventually settling in Toronto, where he has lived and taught for many years.

The stages of every major concert hall, as well as a good many smaller venues, have hosted him. He has played with every important Canadian orchestra, including some thirty concerts with the Toronto Symphony, and has seen Canada from coast to coast, checking in at over one hundred Canadian cities during his career.

As a recognized pianist, commentator, conductor and composer, Mr. Kuerti is regularly heard on CBC radio and television.

A true "Renaissance Man," Mr. Kuerti has brought his musical passion to his other interests which include the outdoors, science, literature and politics. His letters to the editor are frequent and he is not afraid to be controversial or outspoken. He is a much valued supporter of the Peace and Environmental movements, having given benefit concerts for groups such as Amnesty International and Oxfam.

In recent years Mr. Kuerti has gained the distinguished reputation as the best Beethoven interpreter in the land. His recently re-released recordings of the thirty-two Beethoven Piano Sonatas, with Andrew Davis and the Toronto Symphony, have been proclaimed by some critics as the best ever recorded.

The challenge of performing all five Beethoven Piano Concertos in one evening's performance proved possible for Mr. Kuerti recently, the Montreal Gazette describing him as "the perfect candidate for the task, making nearly every note seem restlessly alive."

His critics have long been moved to the poetic in describing his playing.

*"Stones sing and light dances in Kuerti's Schubert...He plays ravishingly, and with monumental assurance...truly spectacular."*

Boston Globe, March 17, 1984

Indeed, Mr. Kuerti is something of a poet himself, as you will see from reading his programme notes. This unique combination of skills, to be able to play the music and describe it with such genius, has put Anton Kuerti in a league all his own. His long-time efforts to bring both his musical and intellectual interpretation to people everywhere, by not only travelling to the most remote places but providing commentary and criticism through various media, has brought to all of us a level of enjoyment and understanding which would otherwise have remained a mystery.

*Surrey Symphony Society*



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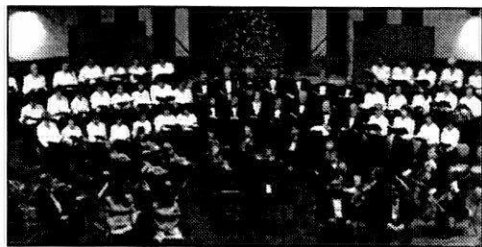
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**Irene Leviton**, *mezzo soprano*  
**Marcel Van Neer**, *tenor*  
**Doug Devillier**, *bass*



**Saturday April 18, 1998, 8 p.m.**

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